

Safety & Security for Houses of Worship

*Howard County Police Department
Community Outreach Division*

Before We Begin...

Breaks

Restrooms

HCC Food and Beverage Policy

HCPD Outreach Table

House of Worship Packet & Handouts

Name Tags and Access Codes



Objectives

Examine history of House of
Worship Violence

Discuss Recent Events with House
of Worship Violence

Discuss Response to Active Threat

Provide Active Threat Prevention
Information

Q&A



Disclaimer

- This presentation should not be relied upon as legal advice and is designed as a guide only.
- You should consult with your own legal advisor prior to implementing a particular plan.

Did You Know?

U.S. Department of
Homeland Security

Protective Security Coordination Division
Office of Infrastructure Protection



Infrastructure Protection Report Series
Potential Indicators, Common Vulnerabilities, and
*Protective Measures: **Houses of Worship***
October 2015

Background

The United States has approximately 345,000 religious congregations consisting of about 150 million members. These members comprise more than 230 different denominational groups. Christian (e.g., Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox Christian, and Latter-day Saints) assemblies account for nearly 97 percent of U.S. congregations.¹ The average congregation has a median attendance of 60 people at its main worship service.² Religious facilities often host regular worship services, and some facilities include schools, childcare centers, administrative offices, residences, and other resources for members of the community. Some houses of worship, such as the Washington National Cathedral, are national icons.

History of House of Worship Violence



16th Street Baptist Church Bombing-1963



Addie Mae Collins



Carole Robertson



Cynthia Wesley



Denise McNair

The **16th Street Baptist Church bombing** was an act of white supremacist terrorism^{[1][2]} which occurred at the African-American 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama on Sunday, September 15, 1963, when four members of the Ku Klux Klan planted at least 15 sticks of dynamite attached to a timing device beneath the steps located on the east side of the church. The four girls killed in the bombing

Seattle Jewish Federation-2006



The **Seattle Jewish Federation shooting** occurred on July 28, 2006, at around 4:00 p.m., when the suspect shot six women, one fatally, at the Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle building in the Bellevue neighborhood of Seattle, Washington, United States. Police have classified the shooting as a "hate crime" based on what the suspect is alleged to have said during a 9-1-1 call

Wedgwood Baptist Church-1999



September 15, 1999, just before 7:00 pm, a crazed gunman entered Wedgwood Baptist Church and opened fire, killing seven and wounding seven. Among those were several youth who were attending a youth activity, a "Saw You at the Pole" prayer rally. The gunman fired over 100 rounds from two different handguns, and exploded a homemade pipe bomb in the Worship Center where the youth activity was being held. The gunman then sat down in the back of the Worship Center and ended his own life.

Charleston Church-2015



The **Charleston church shooting** was a mass shooting in which a white supremacist murdered nine African Americans at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in downtown Charleston, South Carolina, United States, on the evening of June 17, 2015. The suspect was a 21-year-old domestic terrorist and white supremacist who killed nine people (including the senior pastor, state senator Clementa C. Pinckney) during a prayer service. Three other victims survived

First Baptist Church of Sutherland Springs-2017



November 5, 2017, a gunman opened fire inside a rural Texas church, killing more than two dozen people in the largest mass shooting in the state's history.

Twenty-six people were killed during the shooting at First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs, Texas.

St. Peter's Episcopal Church-2012



On May 3, 2012, Howard County Police responded to St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Ellicott City for 2 church workers that had been shot. Howard County Police investigators later learned that the suspect had recently been involved in a dispute with church members. He visited the church regularly to access their food bank, but recently had become belligerent and argumentative. During the incident, the suspect went into the wooded area in close proximity to the church and fatally shot himself.

Active Threats: An Overview

Definition

Locations

Statistics

Active Threat Event

An **active threat** is defined as any incident, which by its deliberate nature, creates an immediate **threat** or presents an imminent danger to the community.



What Are Active Threats?

Active Shooter

Subject Armed with a Weapon

Bomb Threats

Threat of Arson

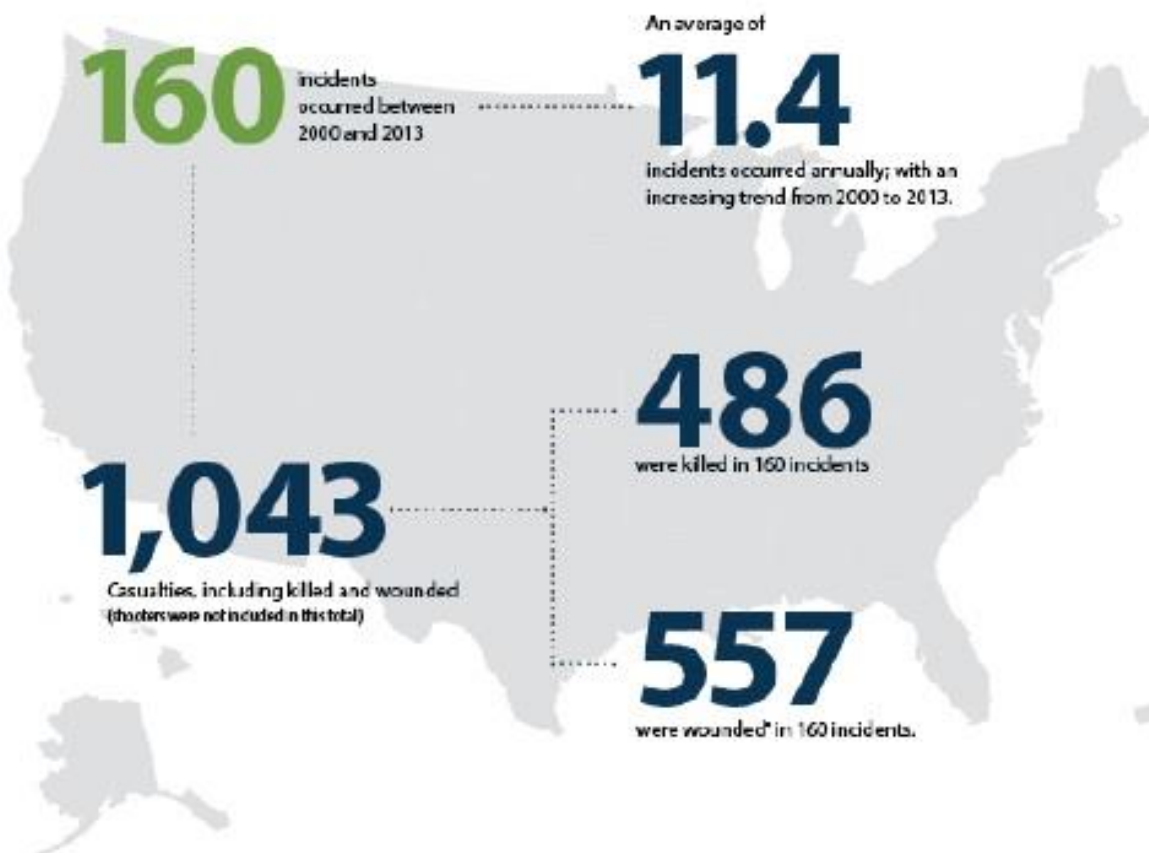
Combative Subject



A person who is actively attempting to kill others

Snapshot

The following characteristics of the 160 active shooter incidents identified between 2000 and 2013 are noted:

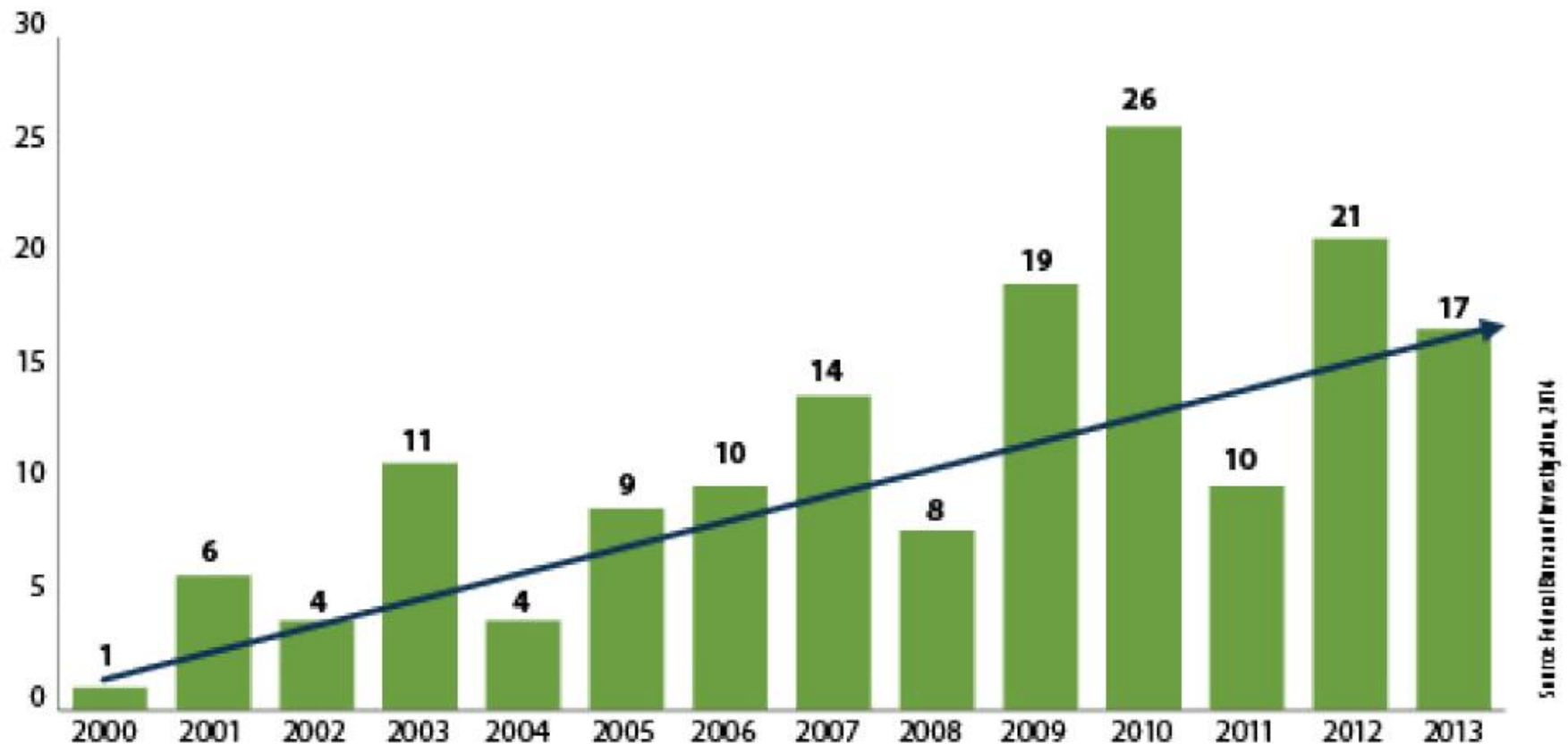


INCIDENTS

- An average of 11.4 incidents occurred annually.
- An average of 6.4 incidents occurred in the first 7 years studied, and an average of 16.4 occurred in the last 7 years.
- 70.0% of the incidents occurred in either a commerce/business or educational environment.¹⁰
- Shootings occurred in 40 of 50 states and the District of Columbia.
- 60.0% of the incidents ended before police arrived.

*A handful of those identified as "wounded" were not injured by gunfire but rather suffered injuries incidental to the event, such as being hit by flying objects/shattered glass or

A Study of 160 Active Shooter Incidents in the United States Between 2000 - 2013: Incidents Annually



First 7 years of study...average 6.4 incidents/year

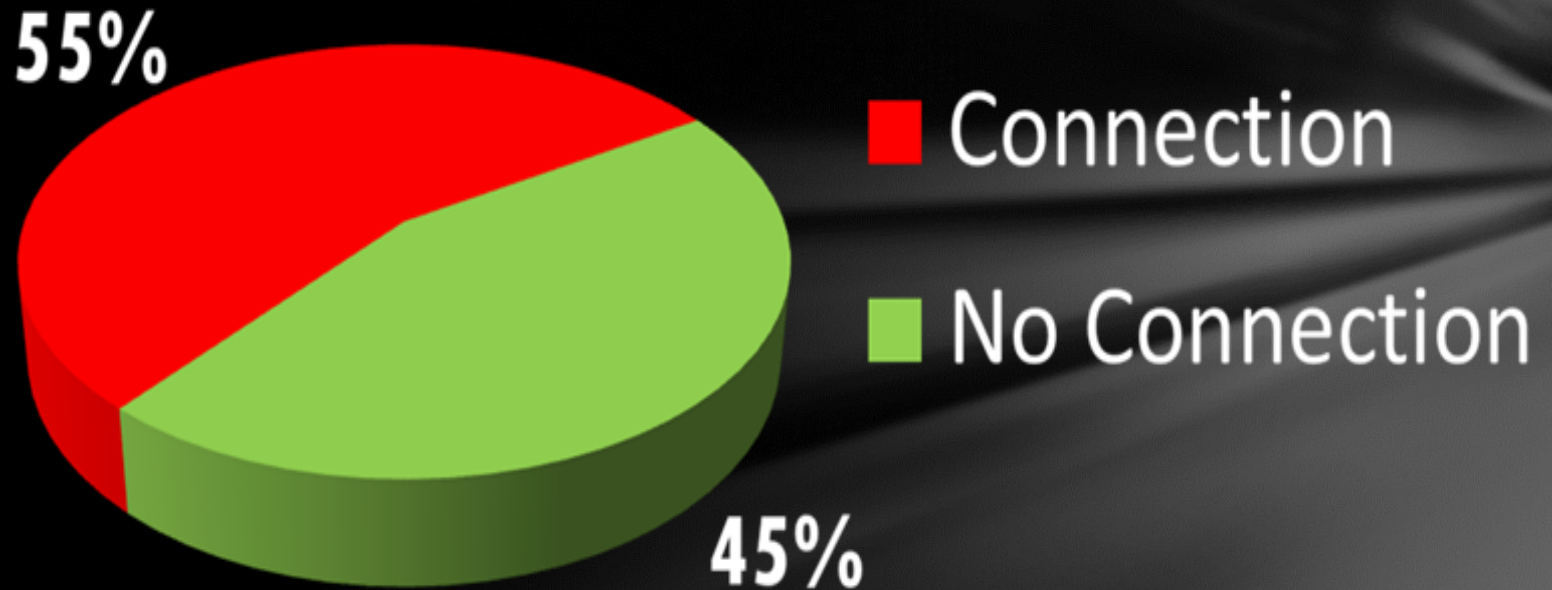
Second 7 years of study...average 16.4 incidents/year

The Assailant

- No “Profile”, but of the 160 active shooter incidents between 2000-2013...
 - All but two involved a single shooter
 - 154 shooters were male; 6 shooters were female
- Avenger Mindset (Deliberate, Focused, Detached)
- May have previously broadcast intentions



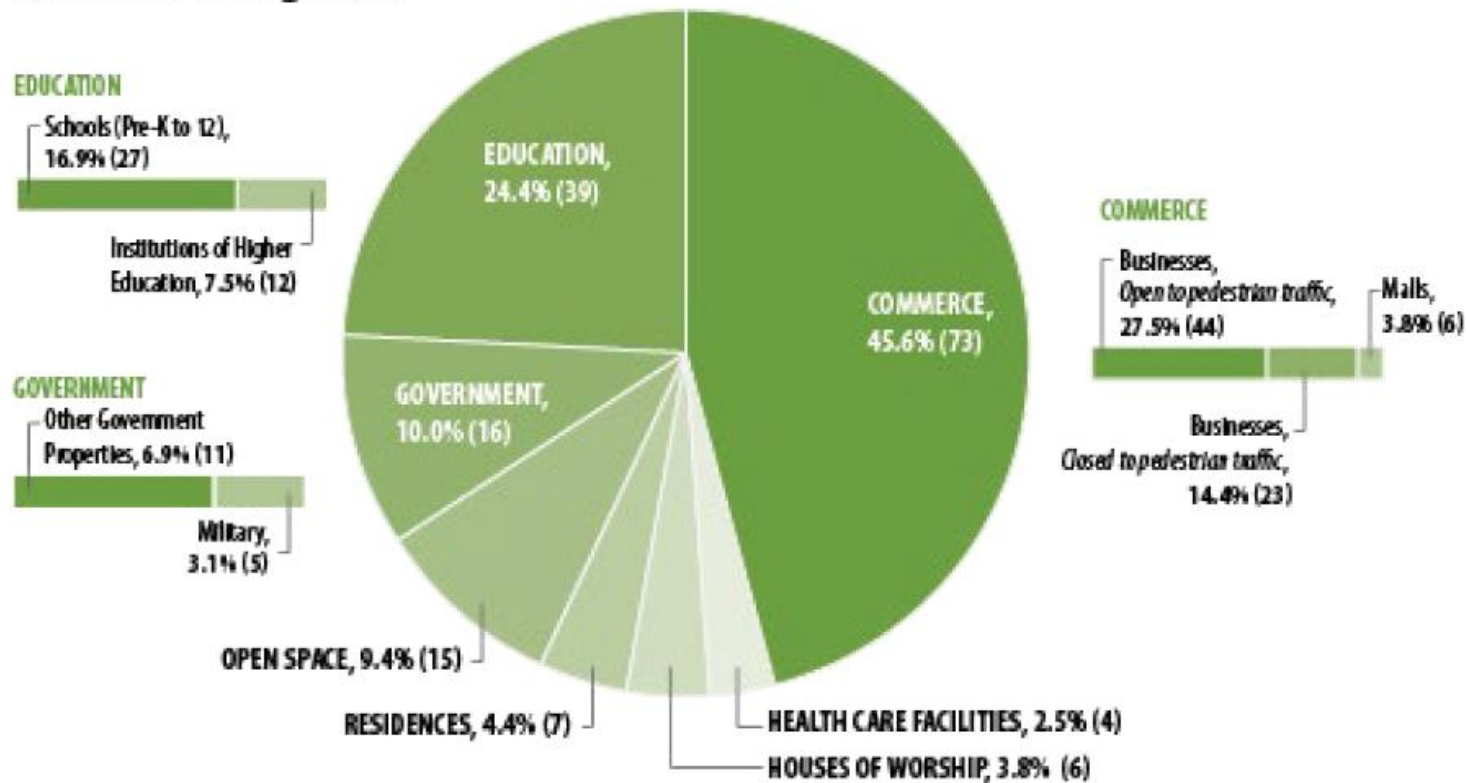
The Assailant Connection to a Facility



*Refers to incidents involving active shooters

The Assailant Targets

A Study of 160 Active Shooter Incidents in the United States Between 2000 - 2013:
Location Categories



Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2014

Shootings at/in Houses of Worship

- 6 incidents in houses of worship (3.8% of all active shooter incidents) between 2000-2013 resulted in 21 people killed and 27 wounded (including 1 law enforcement officer).
- The ages of the shooters ranged from 24 to 69.
- Most incidents occurred on Sundays (3), with the rest occurring on a Tuesday (1), a Friday (1), and a Saturday (1).
- 3 shooters were apprehended (2 of whom were restrained by citizens until police arrived) and 3 committed suicide at the scene (2 before police arrived and 1 after).

Recent Statistics 2014-2017

First Baptist Church, November 5 2017, Sutherland Springs, TX (Sunday)

26 killed, 20 wounded. 26 year old shooter was confronted and shot by civilian, as well as self-inflicted gunshot wound to head.

Burnette Chapel Church of Christ, Sept 24, 2017, Tennessee (Sunday)

1 dead, 7 wounded. 25 year old shooter was shot with own gun by Parishioner.

Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church (House of Worship) (Wednesday)

9 killed. 21 year old shooter fled and was apprehended the next day.

Jewish Community Center of Greater Kansas City and Village Shalom Retirement Community, April 13, 2014 (Sunday)

3 killed at 2 locations. 73 year old shooter apprehended by law enforcement at nearby location

Police Response to Active Threats

Average law enforcement response time to these events is approximately **3 minutes**. In the law enforcement world, this is amazingly fast.

"In 64 incidents where the duration of the incident could be ascertained, 44 (69.0%) of 64 incidents ended in 5 minutes or less, with 23 ending in 2 minutes or less." (FBI)

That means our best way for reducing fatalities is to improve civilian response.



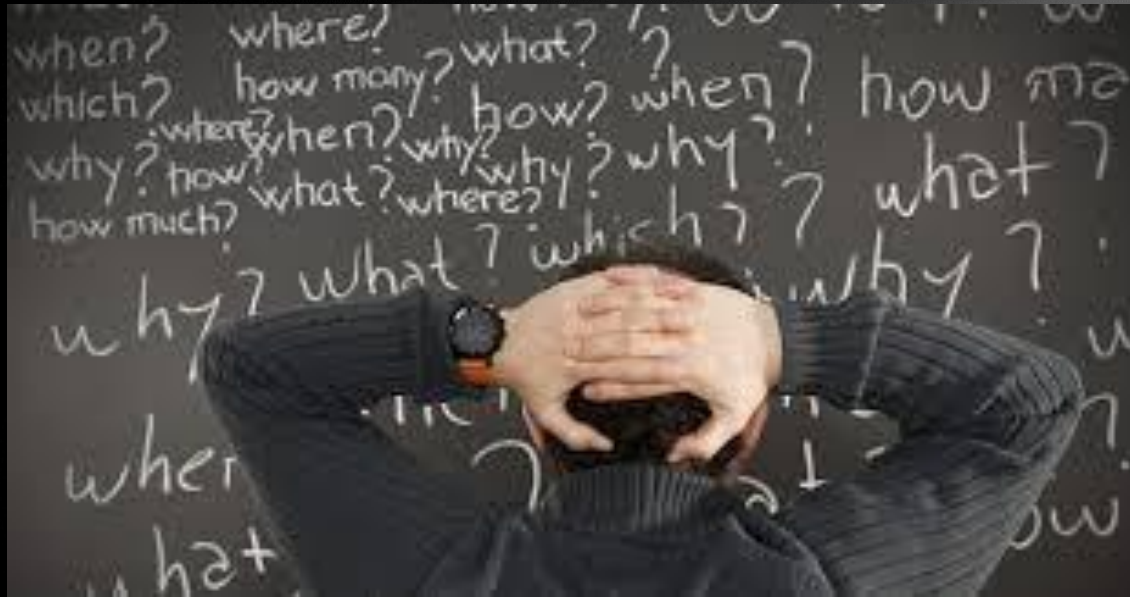
Civilian Response to an Active Threat Incident

Normal human emotional response

What should you do?

Three Stages of Response

- Denial
- Deliberation
- **Decisive Moment**



Denial

“Couldn’t be...”

- Popping sounds
- Flurry of activity outside
- Wait and see
- Consider context



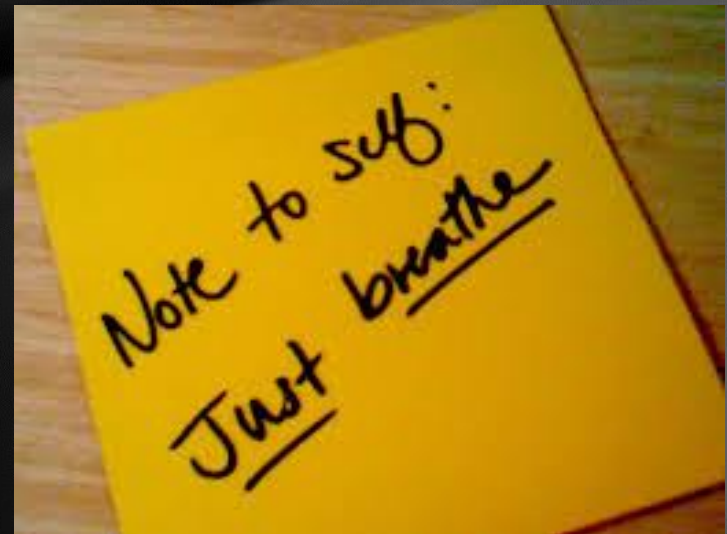
Deliberation Tips

Calm yourself

Focus on breathing (combat breathing)

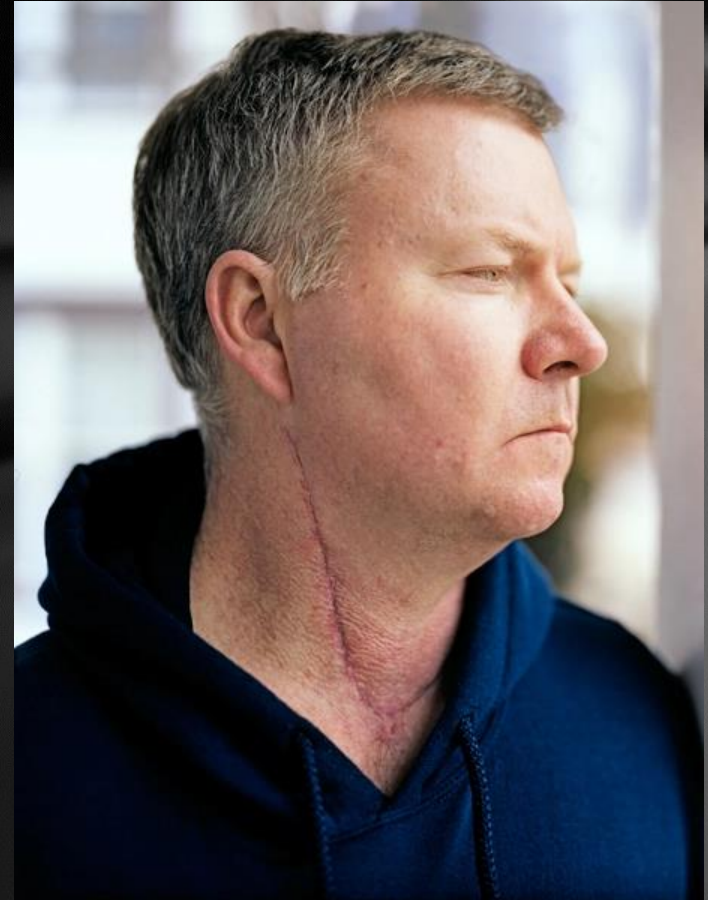
Shift your emotion to "Survival Mindset"

Mental Scripting



Survival Mindset

- “I'm not going out in a parking lot. I'm not going out like this. I'm not gonna let my wife down. I'm not gonna let my daughter down, and I'm not letting my step-kids down.” – Lt Brian Murphy



Decisive Moment



Recommended Active Threat Civilian Response

Run
Hide
Fight



RUN

- Call 911
- Leave ASAP
- Know your exits
- Consider Secondary Exits



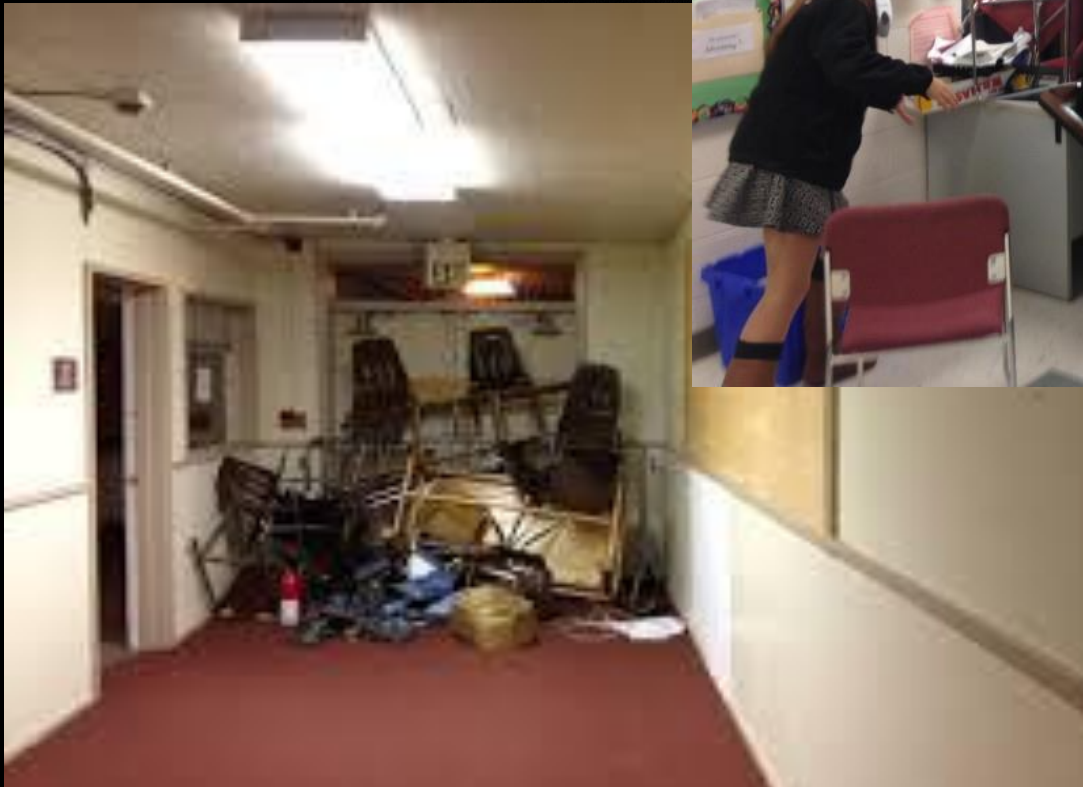
HIDE

- Lock the door
- Lights out
- Out of sight
- Silence cellular phones



HIDE

- Barricade
 - Heavier = Better
 - More = Better
 - Doorstops = Better



HIDE

- Outward opening
 - Ropes
 - Tactical Knots



FIGHT

- Positioning
- Disarm, if possible
- Fight for your life



Myth: Playing Dead



Myth: Hope and Wait



When Police Arrive

Victim or Assailant?

Follow commands

Show your palms

Do not move



During Active Threat **Key Points**

Most incidents are over in minutes

Call 911 as soon as possible

Run, Hide, Fight when faced with an active assailant

Lockdown or evacuate sanctuary, if possible

Lockdown or evacuate childcare area, if possible

Set up and manage safety zones

Follow Police Commands when they arrive

Prevention and Planning



What You Should Do

Establish a Security Team

- Professional or designated volunteer parishioners
- Meets regularly
- Consults with Law Enforcement

This Team Should

- Plan and carry out drills (evacuation, shelter in place, lockdown)
- Develop a communication system (phone tree, email, text message)
- Develop a facility notification system
- Set up members of team to have a specific duty/function during an incident
- Consider Interior/Exterior Monitoring (before, during, after service)
- Review site security



What You Should Do

- **Review site security**
 - Basic facility security measures (cameras, alarms, lighting, hiding places, door locking procedures, etc.)
 - Professional site assessment (private security or LE)
 - Collaborate with Law Enforcement (pre-planning: walk through, entrances and exits, remote access to cameras, etc.)
 - Provide floor plans of facility to LE



What You Should Do

- **Establish Lockdown Protocol**
 - Securing doors/barricades
 - Separate buildings
 - Notification system for entire campus
 - Consider higher security at all times for children's areas



What You Should Do

- **Establish Evacuation Procedure**

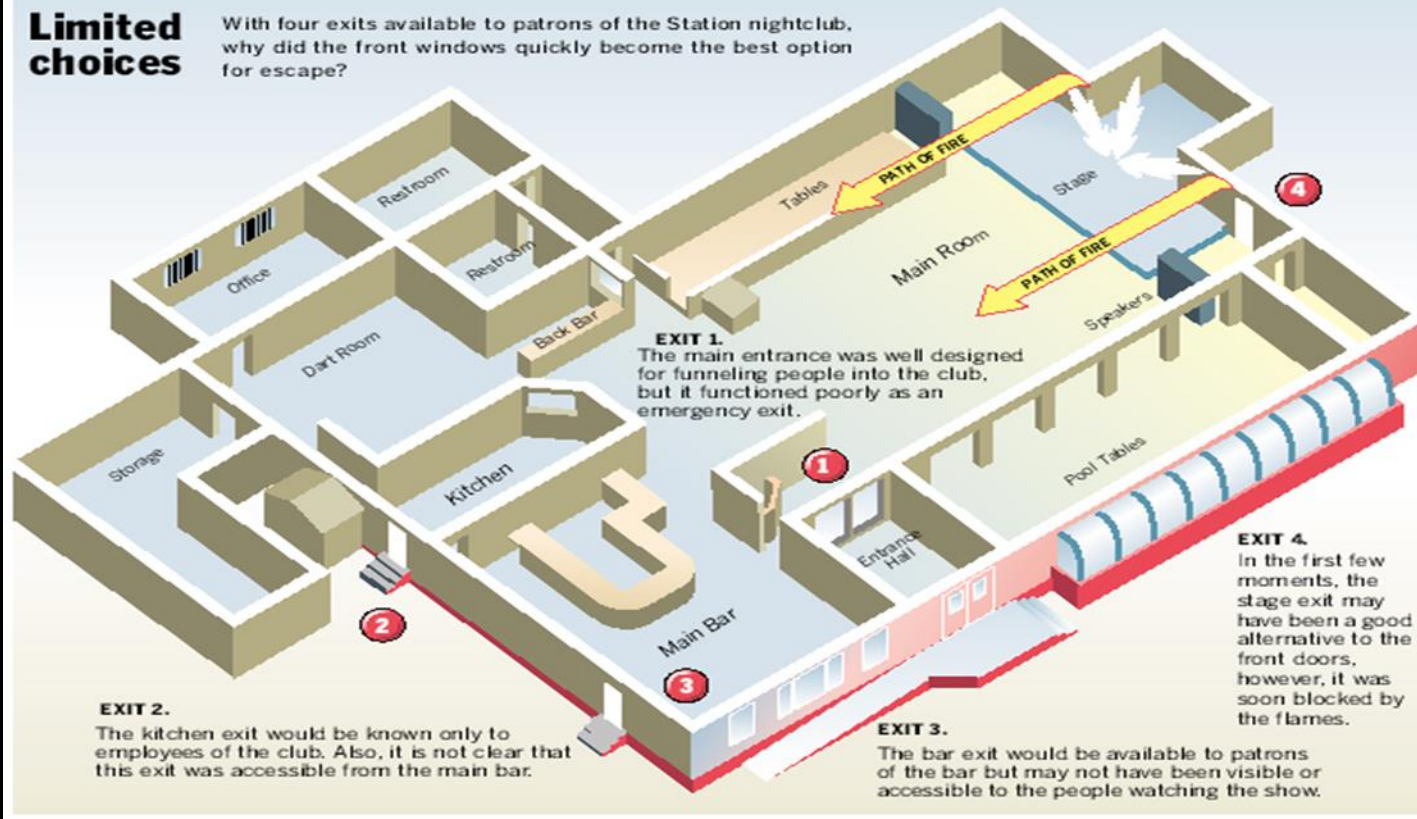
- Does your congregation know all the exits?
- Assigning ushers to exits to prevent funneling at one exit location
- Handicap access
- Multiple exits if one is locked
- Visible reminders (signs, lights above exits)
- Audible alarms (fire alarm)
- Drills



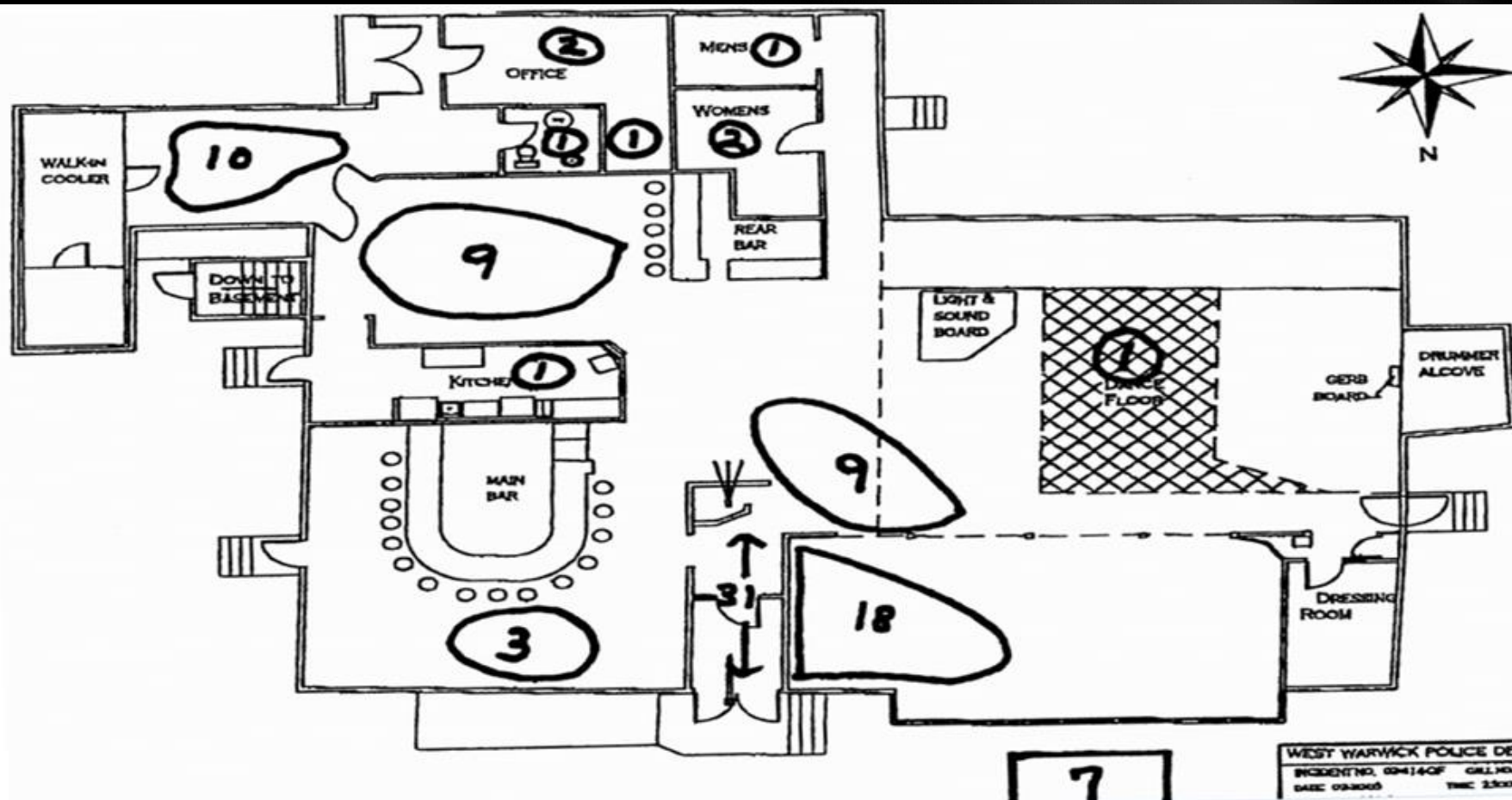
Case Study-Station Nightclub

Limited choices

With four exits available to patrons of the Station nightclub, why did the front windows quickly become the best option for escape?







WEST YARWICK POLICE DE
INCIDENT NO. 004140P GILLING
DATE 09/30/05 TIME 23:00

What You Should Do

Train your congregation

- Have police, your security team, or you can share information learned here
- Hang active shooter posters at visible locations as reminders
- Develop protocols and share with your congregation
- Host events where info is shared and drills can be done
- Talk about active assailants and drill during a service

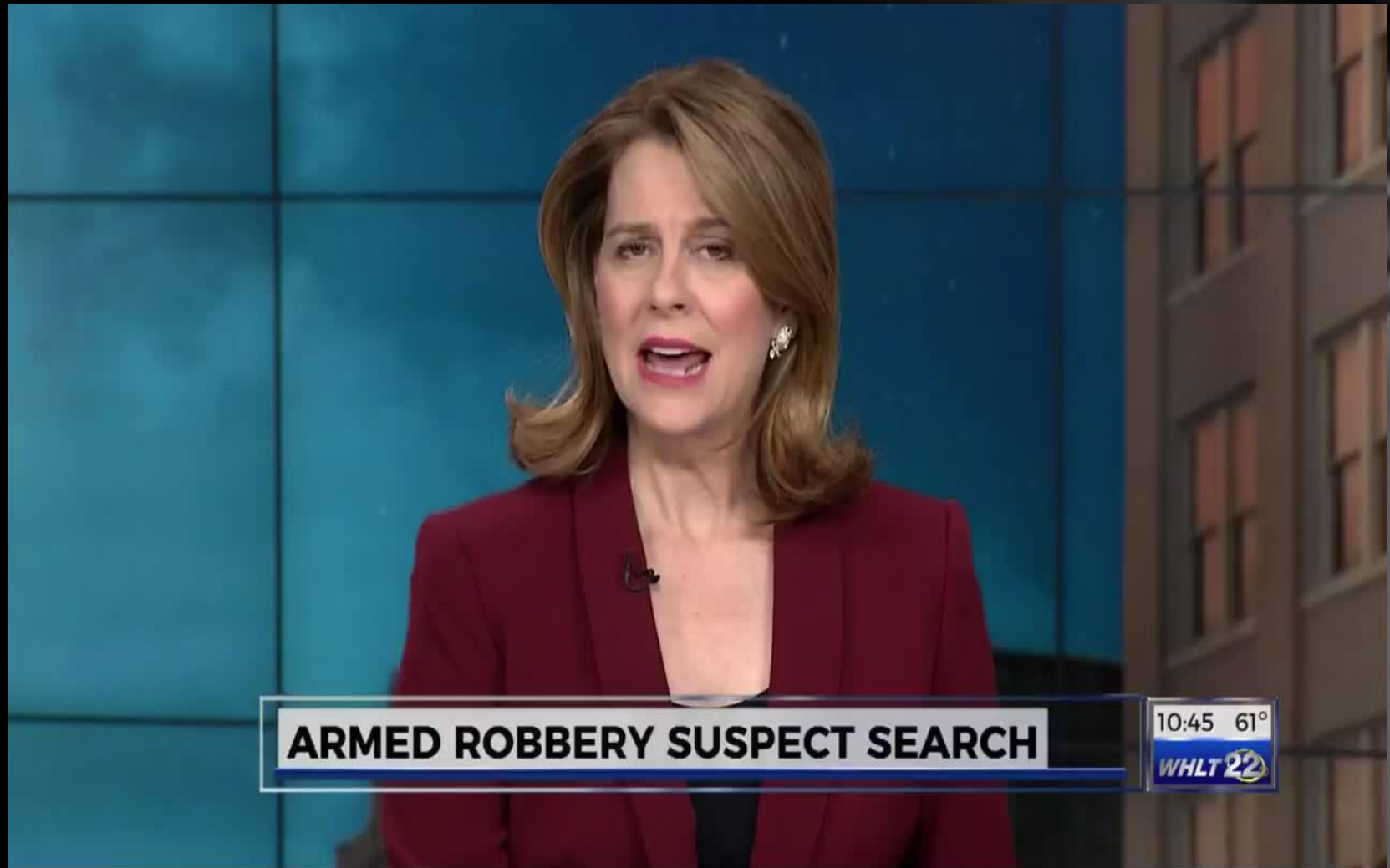
NIJ Safety Plan App

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CBW75cOuvGw&t=15s>

Other Considerations

- Congregation demographics (children, seniors, persons with disabilities, law enforcement, military, etc)
- Firearms Policy (law enforcement, concealed carry permits...who can or may be carrying a firearm)
- Banning individuals who may be a threat

Hattiesburg Church Threatened, Emergency Plan Proved Preparedness



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5AYQHh7_OUY

Wrapping up...

**Active threat events in a House of
Worship are statistically rare**

BUT

**Preparation, planning and practice is key
Run, Hide, Fight when facing an incident
is how to survive and minimize fatalities**

Contact Us

- For Meeting/Presentation Requests/Security Surveys:
 - Email us at: HCPDOutreach@howardcountymd.gov
- Or Call Howard County Police Dept. Community Outreach at:
 - 410-313-2207



Discussion &



Questions